

tagineæ to elaborate anew, he should not hesitate to reduce considerably the number of species, "and perhaps to refer some entire sections to a single specific type." Perhaps even the greater part of two sections, we may add; for of two sections in the 'Prodromus,' one is founded upon sterile and the other upon truly fertile forms of the same species, or set of species: and in another part of the genus, one wide-spread American species figures under at least a dozen names.—ASA GRAY, in *Silliman's American Journal*, Jan. 1858.

Description of a new Genus and some new species of American Birds.

By P. L. SCLATER, M.A., F.L.S. &c.

NEOCHLOE, gen. nov.

Neochloe genus novum Vireoni affine, sed ad Sylvicolam et hujusmodi genera spectans. Rostrum magis carinatum, basi latiore, apice magis acuta: alæ breves, quadratæ, remige prima brevi, secunda longiore, quarta, sexta et septima fere æqualibus et tertiam paulo superantibus; secundariis longis et primariam tertiam excedentibus: pedes ut in genere Vireone.

NEOCHLOE BREVIPENNIS.

N. cinereus, dorso murino et viridi paululum lavato: capite toto supero cum marginibus alarum et caudæ flavicanti-viridibus; remigibus et rectricibus intus nigricanti-cinereis: abdomine medio crissoque albis.

Long. tota 5·0, alæ 2·2, caudæ 2·1.

Of this little bird must, I think, be constituted a third genus of *Vireoninæ*; the peculiar form of the wing rendering it impossible to arrange it as either a *Vireo* or *Vireosylvia*. It has much of the general form of a small species of the former genus, but is readily separable by the short and square wing, all the secondaries (except the three outer) exceeding the second primary in length.

M. Botteri's collection contains one example of this bird (numbered 277), which is labelled "Orizaba, 8 Oct. 1856."

ZONOTRICHIA BOTTERII.

Supra ex cinereo rufescens, capitis et dorsi medii pennis medially fusco-nigris, harum autem marginibus rufescentibus, colore rufescente fusco mixtis: alis nigricantibus, tectricibus omnibus pallido fusco late, remigibus rufo anguste, extus limbatis: cauda graduata, nigricante; rectricum externarum apicibus valde dilutioribus, pallide cinereis: subtus albidus, pectore cinerascentiore, gula clariore, præcipue ad latera rufescente irroratus: carpo flavicante: alis et cauda subtus cinereis: rostro plumbeo; tomis pallidioribus: pedibus flavis.

Long. tota 6·0, alæ 2·5, caudæ 2·6.

I have in vain attempted to identify this bird with any of the known species of *N. American Zonotrichiæ*, and am forced to the conclusion that it is probably undescribed. It comes nearer to *Z.*

Cassini, Woodhouse (Proc. Ac. Sc. Philad. vi. p. 60), than to any other species with which I am acquainted; but differs from this entirely in the markings of the upper surface, the whole centre of the feathers being dark, whereas in *Z. Cassini* the dark colour is confined to a subapical spot. The structure of the two birds is very much alike, but the feet are rather stronger in the present species. I hope M. Botteri will forward better specimens of this interesting species (the examples in the present collection being badly preserved), so as to allow me to make a more accurate investigation of its differential characters.

DIPLOPTERUS EXCELLENS.

Similis D. nævio ex Amer. Merid. sed major, supra magis rufescens, caudæ tectricibus superioribus cinnamomescenti-rufis nigro longitudinaliter striatis: subtus purius albus, pectore non cinerascete, sed paululum rufo tincto: crisso rufescete: rostro brevior, altiore; tarsi longioribus.

Long. tota 11·7, alæ 4·5, caudæ 6·3, tarsi 1·4.

M. Jules Verreaux, whose experienced eye is ever active in distinguishing new species, called my attention to this bird of M. Sallé's last collection, after I had somewhat doubtfully referred it to *D. nævius*. Upon a close re-examination it certainly appears distinct from the South American species, and I have set forth above the grounds of difference, though I have some doubts whether the prevailing rufous tinge of the back may not be owing to the bird being not quite adult. I have not adopted the term *mexicanus*, which M. Verreaux has used for this species in his MS. as we have already a *Dromococcyx mexicanus*, which is of a genus not separated by many authors from *Diplopterus*.—*Proc. Zool. Soc.* 1857.

On a quantity of Crabs thrown up on the Beach in Payta Bay.

By Dr. C. FORBES, R.N.

For some time previous to the occurrence of a severe earthquake-shock, on or about the 30th August 1857, the Bay of Payta swarmed with crabs, of a kind not generally observed, and ten days after the earthquake they were thrown up on the beach, in a raised wall-like line, 3 to 4 feet wide, and to the height of about 3 feet, along the whole extent of the bay, and above highwater-mark.

At the same time that the upheaval of the crabs took place, the water of the bay became changed, from a clear blue, to a dirty blackish-green colour, much resembling that off the Island of Chiloe, Concepcion, and the southern parts of Chili. Ten days afterwards, Dr. C. Forbes found that living specimens of the crabs were still numerous in the bay, but all appeared to be sickly, and numbers came ashore to die.

There were no appearances of any alteration of the relative position of sea and land in the vicinity, nor had any ebullition of gases been observed; although probably to both these causes combined the phænomenon described was due.—*Proc. Geol. Soc.* Jan. 6, 1858.